HR, PM, JP, PB, JMS, GRS, Cunningham, PU, PC.

7/18/71

Mr. J.M.Rothstein, Administrative Assistant
Senator Mike Gravel
U.S.Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Rothstein,

To date, among the few people I have consulted for help with what may be taken as a threat against at least Seantor McGovern, four are reporters. And, to date, of all I have consulted, only one, the physicist, is at all inclined to thinkthis not of serious intent. This is not the same as their saying they expect something to happen. If I also think the chances are against it, I nonethless am beginning this before sunrise on a Sunday morning for the reason the rest of us share, that to ignore it would not be safe or wise. This I also hope you will be tolerant of my typing that at best is rathermaccurate.

Most or all of what fol ows comes from a single source, the senior of these reporters and his wife. This man is widely experienced, having covered much of the world. He and his wife better understand at least one foreign culture than most Americans understand their own. They come from different backgrounds, different parts of this country. The are fine, sensitive people who are both unusually well read and deeply concerned about the political assassinations. It is not because they are my chreished friends that I consulted them but because they have had experiences none of the others have, including me, and have excellent minds. All of us, by the way, are agreed that no matter how extreme a possible interpretation is, it should not be automatically discarded.

Because I then had no copying paperm, I was not able to send a copy to this couple as rapidly as otherwise I would. They live at a distant point. Knowing the conditions of their busy lives and that they, like I, approach 60, I give you my opinion that the length alone of what they sent me is a measure of the seriousness they consider this possible threat may, potentially, represent. And one of the things that impels this early start is my sudden realization that the campaign has actually begun in New Hampshire, with Congressman McClosky's appearance there.

I can't take the time to condense and organize what they have sent, so I'll here be going over several communications, possible with some repetition or self-contradiction, for I was able to skim it only when they arrived yesterday.

They have checked "Constable from Barnstable" through what volumes of nursery rhymes, etc., were available in a decent books store with negative results. Ditto with what seemed possibly relevant in Gilbert & Sullivan (which had occurred to nobody else). They appear to know enough about the origin of "Barnstable", the Cornish-coast town of Barnstaple to feel it is not something to which Shakespeare would have devoted any attention or that it relates. The consider the author of the note "somewhat specialized and rather unusual literary interests and some background." With regard to "R.S.P" they considered two possibilities, confusion during some kind of "trip" or deliberately intended, favor the latter and find it "the same effect (that) appears to be striven for elsewhere as the jumble of references to food in the second paragraph." (I have a feeling two people may have composed it, or, more than one.) They believe it opens "Can Mr. Weisberg translate?" because I am the only one of the origial, well-known critics of the Warren Report still at it, so far as is publicly known.

Because they have been interested in (they do not know) one of those I consider capable of such a thing, they also ask, as though it were some kind of compulsion or added ego trip, whether he might have used my name either to attract me to it or to alert me. (Which reminds me, the psychologist has not had time to respond. He was away at a scientific meeting and I awaited his scheduled return before sending anything to him.) The reporter had always considered this man schizoid, something to which he returns in a subsequent communication. The conclusions to his first letter are, "The one thing that I feel pretty certain about is that this is not just the idle invention of a riddle. I don't know what the purpose is, but believe it exists and has strong origins and dynamics. You yourself bring up the possibility that Rothstein was selected because of his address. Is there any hint of the necrophile in your candidate."...

The suggestion of necrophilia is somewhat surprising to me because this "candidate" has used the same word in a somewhat different sense to describe himself and for another reason. I enclose a copy of his own listing of his aborted "Zanarchy" publication, obtained from the poet. In it he dsecribes his bulletin as "of political necrophilia".

If I didn't tell you. Thornley had interested me for several reasons, his friendship with Oswald, his needless offer to be a fink after the FBI had already interviewed him and when, presumeably, there was nothing he could add to what he had said (very little, according to that FBI report, which I have), his reported celebration of the JFK assassination, his total failure a s a writer, even when he had such a subject as Oswald, who he knew well, and, among other things, his later and utterly irrational threats against me for two incredible reason: my genuine effort to keep him from getting into the difficulties he did get into with Jim Garrison, which I could see coming; and my accurate quotation of his Warren Commission testimony. His were legal threats. He was careful never to address one to me, but he also broadcast them so they would come back to me.

Also possibly bearing of this point is his having beaten up a girl who lived with him in New Orleans and then almost gouging out the eyes of a young man who later protested it. Of both he gloated in his letters that I have (the originals).

In considering "Ockie", this reporter discounts the suggestion it may be a nickname for Francis Parker Yocket, author of Imperium, an American Mein Kampf, who died somewhat mysteriously in a San Francisco jail. However, I suggest that you may be able to learn better than I whether Ockie may have been his nickname. I would prefer not to do it because my doing it would attract attention. Jay Silverman is the Washington territory director of the Anti-Defamation League. His phone is Ex3-5284. He knows the Yockey story well and told me that Yockey's death immediately followed a visit to him by Willis Carto, who I presume is known by reputation to you. I believe I have earlier referred to the Wallace youth movement and its remaining successors in the Washington area.

My wife and I had come to and told you about William of Occam (Ockham), but we were unfamiliar with his philosophy. of him this reporter says,"...unlikely to occur to an ordinary American. As a theologian he is remembered for his defiance of the Pope, and a philosopher for his theory of minimals. In logic, this apparently involves the principal that the likeliest answer to a problem, or the first to be considered, is the simplest. Let us keep that in mind. It may be part of the message." To this I add Thornley's varying religions, if he holds any belief seriously enough to designate it thus.

"...I then recalled how I first heard...of Occam — not in a university course in logic...but in a science fiction novel walled Occam's Razor, published in 1957 as an origianl Ballantine book. (i.e., an original paperback.) The author, to my astonishment, turns out to be one David Duncan, author of several other novels, none of which I have even encountered. I could dismiss this as a coincidence, except that the message writer appears to go considerably out of his way in the second paragraph to work in the word "logic", in only in the laboriously contrived phrase "fission chip log-ic billings-gate." I find the use of Duncan, log-ic and Ockie more than coincidence.

"I know nothing more of David Duncan, author of Occam's Razor, and the novel itself never explains what is meant by "razor". I assume for the moment it may be a reference to some philosophical concept centering around Occam's law for the solution of problems. The Library of Congress card is NO. 57 - 13096. Whether the aithor David Duncan qualifies as the"barfly heir of Earl George Sande" seems questionable. It seem more likely that Duncan is meant at least to refer to one of the Kennedys...What the novel tell us by implication is that the message writer is a devotee if not a dabbler in science fiction. Occam's Razor, if not regarded as a minor classic by science fiction critics, contains a remarkable tour de force in writing, an entirely convincing account of a scientific experiment that goes wrong and results in a time-slip or cosmic accident in which this world continuum merges briefly with another, stranding two inhabitants of the other world on a Caribbean island used as a missle base. The scientist is lecturing a group of Navy officers, preparing them for the caluclation of rocket orbits to the moon, and cites William of Occam's law or parsimony. He illustrates it with a soap bubble experiment in which complicated wire forms are lowered into a soapy solution to illustrate how nature forms membranes with the smallest amount of energy and material possible. One particular form, involving two Moebius (i.e., German mathematecian, also Mobius) surfaces interlocking, does not behave as it should and the collision with the other time continuum occurs. When I looked up William of Occam at the time, several years ago, nothing was mentioned in the account I found (I think it was in the Encyclopaedia Brittainica) about the law of parsimony or minimals. What did emerge is something about Occam's law which concerned the rule about the solution of problems. By indirection, the message writer may be drawing our attention to this, presumably the best-known teaching of William of Occam. To what purpose isn't clear, of course."

I suggest that in the context of the end of Senator McGovern in New Hampshire, one possible meaning may be too clear-HW

"The message writer appears therefore to be a person who knows his way around in science fiction, which many writers keep an eye on — whether they admit it or not — simply because some of the most creativeand ingenius writing has been done in this field in recent decades. The message writer also appears to be a person who has had some exposure to English philosophy; whether in a formal course in college or through his own explorations remains to be seen..." However, I suggest that it also could have come through Occam's Razor, which would have been readily available to a young man then in or about to entre the Marines.

With reference to the Constable from Barnstable, there was Deputy Sheriff Christopher Look (of Dukes, not Barnstable County), but there seems to be no reason for him, if he is referred to, to ask the question put in the message. He testified that he saw a man and one or two women arguing in Ted Kennedy's car the night of Chappaquiddick. It clashed with the Senator's testimony. The reporter agrees, however, that this can be a feference to Senator Kennedy, as I earlier suggested for otherreasons. He also feels that the "barfly heir" line can be such a reference also because of a reputation for drinking and chasing women, whether or not warranted, and that by elliptical development "magister of horse" could become jockey, then jock, or cocksman, with the further suggestion of the jockey named Earl (Harold) Sande, "while a very successful jockey in the 1920s, tried and failed to make a much-publicized comeback in the 1930s. Or, a warning to Teddy not to try. Further, if the Seantor is beginning to ask questions about the assassination (I think the contrary, HW), "this could be one way of telling him to keep his questions to himself." Carrying this idea further, the reporter and his wife feel that the next paragraph, which is a mishmash of allusions to food and the nautical, can mean, "Get yourself a copy of the Warren Commission Report and be satisfied, possibly in accordance with Occam's law of the simplest solutions being the best."

Earlier I think I suggested to you that there are references to the major crop in Senator McGovern's South Dakota, wheat, and that I have been told one of the Chinese meanings of "Mein" is consistent with this. The reporter and his wife have both lived in China. The believe the Chou Mein is a reference to "ch'ao mien, meaning stir-friend noodles...the use of chou for chow may be a deliberate variation to go with folie at the end of the sentence, indicating the

writer's exposure to some smattering of French. Since the only other misspelling (sheers for shears) appears to be deliberate, this may be, too. The point about chou or chow mein is that in this country it has little resemblnce to the dish of the same name, ch'ao mien, in China." Referring to the alleged origin of the dish in this country,"thereby convenying an insult the miners were too ignorant to understand...The point is that a 'plate of chou mein' connotes a scrambled mess of leftovers, which is perhaps as accurate a description of the Warren Commission Report as one ever will find."

There follows the suggestion that "Glebe and Mouse" can be taken as a very indirect reference to the Congress or the government in general, that the Warren Report can be considered a ball and chain "in the sense of a permanent crippling handicap which only someone else can remove from a KennedyW, and that the Kopechne incident could be considered a ball and chain. "Folie appears genuinely to be used in its French meaning, a folly" with one possible folly being the Warren Report, also possibly intended by billingsgate. The hashed tona, despite uncertainty about tona, may be a reference to the suggested wisdom that Senator Kennedy content himself with the official explanations of the assassinations (and considering that there at the time of postmark were new and serious questions then being raised about the Los Angeles crime, this seemingly extreme suggestion ought not, I think, be discarded without thought). "Pop! could be indicative of what will happen." If I have failed to note it, someone has reminded me that in my first book I repeatedly sued this descritpion of the shots in Dealey Plaza by amny witnesses. Consistently, with the use of spinach connoting Popeye in the comics,"...violence, with great energy, which could hark back to the reference to fission in the preceeding paragraph."

The threat to Senator McGovern is interpreted as we consider possible, and the reporter agrees with the earlier interpretation of lilacs as a reference to New Hampshire.

From a source who may not be but I do consider undependable, the reporter recalls having been told that he "had been told by a former DJ employee of RFK that Ted had said he knew 'there was a phoney cop on the island'." Probably Martha's Vinyard, Dukes County. There is also attached a series of references to Deputy Sheriff Look (Christopher S., also called "Huck") as lay reader in Episcopal church, deputy, oil delivery man or owner of Edgartown ~~XXXXXXXX~~ Dukes County), summer resident Chappaquiddick, guard at Edgartown Yacht Club and excerpts from news stories about him or referring to him. Also provided, xeroxes of several stories about him.

This latter indicates one mailing that has not yet reached me. However, as the time I have taken shows, I felt that for whatever it might be worth, I had best inform you of this without delay. I think it might be good if we knew more of the novel, Occam's Razor. And since, necessarily, we are dealing with the farpout, I note another novel's relevance to what came out at the Sirhan trial, that novel being <u>The Billikin Courier</u>, based on an actual case in Denmark, in some ways close to the expert testimony at the Sirhan trial and even closer to the observations of the writer of <u>R.F.K. Must Die!</u>, who was present when the psychologist Diamond experimented with Sirhan in his cell.

My apologies for the errors I'll not have time to correct.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg